

The Power of the Empty Tomb

Matthew 28:1–10

That Sunday morning Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to the tomb not expecting a miracle. They came expecting death, but they found life. Matthew 28:1-10 tells us that Easter is not just a historical event—it is the moment God changed the world with the empty tomb.

I. The Shaken World (Matthew 28:1–4) The Marys had seen that the tomb was empty, the guards, and Peter and John would see it recorded in John's gospel. They experienced the earthquake, the guard's reaction. God's power raised Jesus from the dead, so that Jesus would conquer death, be the sacrifice for our sin, and through our faith, be our Savior! I hope that the power of the empty tomb has transformed you, that it has shaken your world for His glory! Matthew, unique among the gospel writers, mainly written to a Jewish community, begins the resurrection morning with a "violent earthquake". This was not a natural tremor, but the earth moving presence of God.

- a. **God's power moved the stone.** The angel did not roll the stone away to let Jesus out; he rolled it away to let the world in. The empty tomb is not a failure of security, but an invitation for humanity to see the evidence of victory.
- b. **God's power momentarily paralyzed the guards.** The soldiers, representing the pinnacle of Roman power, shook with fear and became like "dead men." They stood in stark contrast to the Risen Lord, who is the Living God.

When your world is shaken, know that God has removed the barrier of death. Romans 6:23
"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

II. The Sending Words (Matthew 28:5–8)

The angel gives a message that turns sorrow into joy: *"He is not here; for he has risen, just as he said"*.

- a. **The empty tomb is a reminder. (v.6) "As He Said":** The resurrection was not an afterthought; it was the plan. Jesus is faithful to his promises. If God says it, it is a firm foundation for our hope.
- b. **The empty tomb is reassurance. (v.6) "Come and See":** The faith we hold is not blind. It is based on a historical reality—an empty tomb, a missing body, because of the risen Savior.
- c. **The empty tomb causes a response. (vv.7-8) "Go and Tell":** The message of the resurrection is too good to keep to ourselves. The women are immediately commissioned to be the first missionaries of the resurrected Christ.

III. The Savior to be Worshiped (Matthew 28:9–10) Jesus is worthy of our worship! This is why we worship every day and corporately on Sundays, to celebrate the resurrection! If He didn't raise we shouldn't or wouldn't have any reason to worship, but He did! We will worship Him! As the women ran, fearful yet filled with joy, Jesus himself met them.

- a. **Jesus welcomed them. (v.9) He Greets Them:** Jesus speaks a word of joy, often translated as "Rejoice." He doesn't hold them at arm's length. He greets them as friends and family ("my brothers," v.10), showing that the resurrection brings us into relationship with God. Jesus conquered death to meet us where we are today! We are sinners, in need of Him to save us! He welcomes us today!
- b. **They worshiped Him. (v.9):** They took hold of his feet. This gesture shows the resurrection is bodily, tangible, and real. He was not a ghost; He is the physical, living Lord.
- c. **They went to share about Him. (v.10)** Transformation of Fear: The women were still fearful, yet filled with joy. This is the "fearful joy" of Easter—a realization of God's awesome power that turns our discouragement into unwavering hope.

The message of Matthew 28:1-10 is clear: Jesus is risen, and because He lives, we can face anything. We can have salvation through faith in Christ because of the power of the empty tomb!

While the world tries to give us lies of hopelessness, the empty tomb stands as the undeniable truth of victory.

The empty tomb is an invitation: The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is available to you today. It is the power to overcome sin, the power to fear no more, and the power to live fully alive. It is the power to be raised from death to life! Romans 8:11
“If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.”

He is not here. He is risen!